

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

**[00100]** A ring network element and the ring network architectures it enables.

According to one embodiment of the invention, a single network element includes a full TDM cross-connect and a multiple ring unit. The full TDM cross-connect is coupled to very line card slot in the single network element with the same amount of bandwidth connection. In addition, the full TDM cross-connect is programmable on an STS-1 basis. The multiple ring unit allows for the simultaneous support of multiple TDM rings.

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